NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY
PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Pulpit Preaching

VOL. XII, NO. 5, MAY, 1959

MBOLS OF FAITH:

The Graded Cross 2
Friedrich Rest

IE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Make the Most of Your Church 3
Robert E. Goodrich, Jr.

The Church Then and Now 7
Theodore P. Ferris

A Church on the Move 11
Eugene R. Moore

ORTH QUOTING 14
E. Paul Hovey

IRIST-CENTERED LIVING

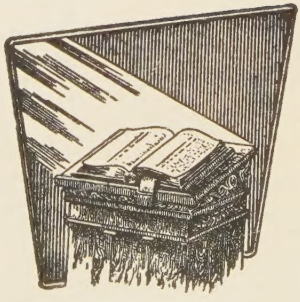
This I Believe about the Christian Life 19
Wesley P. Ford

Our Search for Significance 21
Gene E. Bartlett

This Is to Live 24
Homer J. R. Elford

The Thief and the Shepherd 27
Robert Sumner Jackson

The Task of Happiness 29
Phillips Packer Elliott



EDITORIAL COMMENTS

For a number of months it has been our privilege to offer a series, "Symbols of Faith," prepared by the Rev. Friedrich Rest and illustrated by prints from his book, **Our Christian Symbols.** We are grateful both to Mr. Rest and to his publisher, The Christian Education Press, for providing the illustrations.

Our Christian Symbols, now available in an enlarged edition, contains more than 100 illustrations, twenty-four of which are in color. Symbols have been described as silent teachers, and the lessons to be gleaned from this book are manifold.

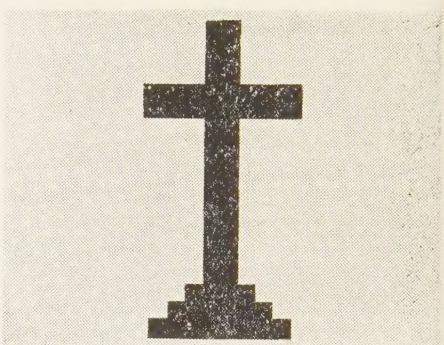
Next month's sermon themes will be "The Christian's America," sermons for Independence Sunday, and "Old Testament Personalities," another in our informal sequences on the great men of the first covenant. The June theme will be "The Christian's Witness," sermons on discipleship and evangelism.

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING

Twenty Centuries of Christianity by Paul Hutchinson and Winfred E. Garrison is a concise history which began with Dr. Hutchinson's **Life** article and was continued after his death by Dr. Garrison. This historical interpretation is well-proportioned, clearly expressed, and easily grasped. It is a commendable and useful volume. (Harcourt, Brace and Co., 306 pp., $6.00) **Story of the Bible World** by Nelson Beecher Keyes is a handsome and extremely interesting survey

(Continued on page 17)

SYMBOLS OF FAITH:



The Graded Cross

Friedrich Rest
St. Paul's United Church of Christ
Evansville, Indiana

Many of us agree that John 3:16 is the outstanding text in the Bible. It is "marked and inwardly digested" by so many because of its depth in meaning.

Many of our churches have a Calvary or Graded Cross which represents our Christian faith. Originally, the cross was a symbol of defeat and death, for crucifixion was a common method of Roman executive for criminals of the lowest type. After the resurrection the cross grew in meaning and significance until now we agree with the poet:

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime.

The cross is not a symbol only of the Roman Catholic Church, unless

(Continued on page 18)

Pulpit Preaching

Editors
CHARLES L. WALLIS
Keuka College Church
Keuka Park, N. Y.
CHARLES L. ALLEN
Grace Methodist Church
Atlanta, Georgia
E. PAUL HOVEY
The Federated Church
Lewiston, Idaho

Address sermon manuscripts and editorial correspondence to Rev. C. L. Wallis, Keuka College, Keuka Park, New York. Receipt will be acknowledged.

Address subscription orders to PULPIT PREACHING, Post Office Box 2088, Jackson, Mississippi. In Great Britain, address subscriptions to Religious Book Shop, 79 Reginald St., Luton, Bed., England.

Published and printed monthly at Jackson, Miss., by the Tombigbee Publishing Co. Subscription Price: U. S. and Canada, $4.00 per year; other countries $4.50 per year: single copies $.50. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at Jackson, Mississippi under the Act of March 3, 1879.

ROBERT E. GOODRICH, JR.

THEODORE P. FERRIS

EUGENE R. MOORE

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR CHURCH

Robert E. Goodrich, Jr., First Methodist Church, Dallas, Texas

Scripture: Acts 20:18-28

Sometimes I have thought that it would be a good thing to place a sign over the entrance way to every church which would read: "This is the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood."

It would be difficult to pass through a door marked in such a way without it influencing our attitudes and reminding us of something we ought never to forget, that the church is not ordained of man, that it was not created by persons for the preservation of a particular culture. The church is ordained of God. He reached through Jesus Christ to set it upon earth and bought it with His blood.

Its own history is the best validation of this fact. Think of its strange ability to rise again and again. Think of the strange capacity of the church to survive the worst that both its friends and enemies can do to it. Think of its strange power to reconcile man with God and thus work miracles in human relations and personal lives. "The strangeness of the Church," as Daniel Jenkins phrased it, argues that the church is not of man but of God.

This would mean, therefore, that for the Christian the church can never be a take it or leave it matter. Superficial familiarity with it is not enough. We are called to make the most of the church.

Now at first this phrase may sound objectionable to some persons. It may seem to suggest using the church for personal profit or gain, or to promote a program of some kind. And there are always those who are ready to do this. Some people do join the church for business reasons. With them it's a matter of good contacts, not great convictions. And there are others who are quite ready to use the church for all kinds of things. Just a little over a year ago a man called me and thoroughly condemned the church of our city for not praying harder for rain. He thought it should be the central matter every Sunday morning. And when I questioned him as to which church he belonged to, it developed that he did not belong to any church, didn't believe in them! But he was ready to use them. Only a few months later in Texas there were some folks ready to use the church to try to stop the rains!

But of course, we're not talking about using the church in any selfish or self-seeking program. Rather, we are to make the most of our church as a Christian. We are to let it mean all that God intended it to mean in our life. This is the tragedy: that it was bought at so great a price and yet even that price was in vain unless it means what God intended in our life.

Not long ago I attended a demonstration of Hi Fi reproduction of music and records. I've never really been initiated into the terminology of the Hi Fi world; it was quite a while before I discovered they were saying tweeters instead of tweezers. And this business of 15,000 or 25,000 cycles is completely beyond me. But I did understand one thing: there's a

lot of music and sound on a record which you never hear when you play it on an ordinary machine. Play it on Hi Fi and you are amazed at what you were not hearing before, even though it was there on the record all the time.

And then I thought of the way that so many persons are a part of the church, but they never hear all of its music and are never aware of all of its glory. They don't understand what it could be in their life. They have never even begun to make the most of it.

There are some things which the church means to almost everyone who is a member of it in any sense. It's the place where some of the most important ceremonies of life occur. There's no substitute for the church when the vows of marriage are made. And when a couple share God's creative work and would dedicate their child, it really would not be fitting to go to the bank for the ceremony, not even a gold-plated one. And can anything take the place of the ministry of the church in that solemn, sacred hour when we bid farewell to some loved one lost awhile?

And for everyone the church is the place of worship through which we gain perspective and can bring our lives into tune with the infinite. And it's a place of learning, where we come to know the great historic doctrines of the faith and realize that they are not theories spun in ivory towers but are the best efforts of men to give form and language to what they have experienced of God. We learn to know the Bible and become familiar with the scriptures.

And the church is a place of fellowship — one which includes persons of all races and nations around the whole wide earth. It's something to realize that even today Christians in Japan or Germany or Holland or Australia or the Belgian Congo have prayed for you and me.

But there is also that fellowship which is more personal. A crowd can do things to us or for us, depending on the complexion of the crowd. The church is a fellowship which can be ours on the highest level, friendships which can be the answer to the loneliness of the city. Many a person has been sustained by this fellowship when everything else has failed.

For almost everyone the church means things like these. But if this is all, then we're missing so much. In a sense, we're merely making the best of it, not the most of it. So let's try to understand even more about the church by borrowing the terminology of the airlines. Maybe it will help us to understand what the church might mean in our life.

I.

First, let's think of it in terms of a maintenance base. That's what the church should be for us. As I understand it, the maintenance base is where machines and tools are available to restore and repair and renew the planes to keep them flying. They also tell me — and I do hope it's the truth!! — that regularly, after so many hours of flying, a plane is brought in for renewal. They don't wait until something is obviously wrong, or until it develops trouble and crashes. Well, the church ought to be such a maintenance base for our soul and spirit.

Think what a hundred and sixty-eight hours can do to us: that's the number of hours in a week. Think of the storms and the stress and strain which are involved in living through almost any week in our world. How foolish to wait until disaster overtakes us and we crack up in faith or spirit. How we need a maintenance base where our faith can regularly be restored or renewed, where we can find the reassurance of a majestic and transcendent God whose power is limited only by His love. How much it helps to come into the presence of persons whose very lives are a witness to that faith, persons whose sacrifical living restores our confidence in man himself. We see what it means to live for great ideas and ideals.

One pastor recalls a woman in his first church, who nearly twenty-five years ago drove many miles, Sunday after Sunday, in fair weather or foul to be present at church. One day he asked her why she did it and she made this unforgettable answer: "Sometimes it helps." She might have elaborated and explained how it sometimes helps her to bear the monotony of her days, or to keep things in their proper perspective or to keep her faith in God and man. But instead she merely answered, "Sometimes it helps!!" And once every 168 hours, she was in her maintenance base.

Or sometimes it may be that our conscience needs to be restored and set right. The dangerous thing about conscience is that it can be trained, or silenced, or midsdirected. I understand that sometimes this can happen to a compass on a plane, and it's easy to picture the dangerous result and the tragedy which might occur if the compass is not periodically checked and made true. And so exactly with your conscience.

Following a Sunday evening service, a young woman came to say, "Pastor, I need help: these people seem so clean and good, and I feel so dirty inside!" Through the church she had become aware of what had happened, little by little, in her life. And that evening, her conscience was made new, set in a true direction.

I think God paid his tremendous price for the church that it might serve us as a maintenance base for our faith and soul and spirit and conscience. And it must be so for us if we are to make the most of it.

II.

Let's also think of the church as an operations base. For an airline this is the nerve center for its lines across the state or the nation or around the world. In the operations base you can see the real purpose of its business as it seeks to serve the transportation needs in all the far flung places. And so the church ought to be such a center through which we serve the Kingdom of Christ, and in which we find a reason or a justification for being alive today.

The next time you see a lonely little church out in the country, try to picture it in such terms. Think how even that little church has ties which reach around the earth, streams of influence which go forth into many lands to touch the lives of countless unseen persons. This is true of every Christian church. And yet, even so, surely God must think not of what has been done, but what might be done if each of us made the most of our church.

Think how today's world calls for an ever increasing missionary operation which should involve all of us. Three years ago a senior ministerial student who had spent a summer in travel overseas returned in time for the September school opening. On the first Sunday at home he knelt at the altar of his church, saying, "I want to rededicate myself. Having seen some of the world I realize now that it calls for the kind of dedication I had never made. I want to make it just now." The church may help us to become aware of that need, but it can also be the place where we make such a dedication of ourselves, and it can be the base of operations through which our life can answer the challenge of the world.

But it's not only the world out there which offers a challenge: it's also the world here at home. There are so many who need to be reached and the church ought to be an operations base for what we call evangelism. Surely there's something wrong with a Christian who never speaks to another person about Christ. And there's something missing from the experience of a Christian who has never led another person into the church. And surely there's something terrifying in the fact that somebody, somewhere may fail or break or perish for the lack of what we might have said or done.

In a recent sermon, Dr. Roy Wil-

liams, a minister in Memphis laid bare his soul as he told of a card which contained the name of a young man. He made two or three calls in an effort to see the young man, but was not successful. He put the card aside on his desk, where it was covered by papers and soon slipped from his mind. And then one evening Dr. Williams was visiting in the hospital when a nurse stopped him in the hall and said, "I wish you'd go by that room down there. Their son is dying and they're all lost. I think you can help them."

In the room he found an elderly father and mother in tears from the burden of their sorrow. He introduced himself and they gave him their names. "When I heard that name." Dr. Williams said, "it struck a chord in my memory and pricked my conscience for there on the bed was the young man whose name was on the card I had pushed aside on the desk. He lay unconscious, in the last stages of a brain cancer. I held his hand and prayed that God would forgive me." The young man died a couple of days later. "But I still have that card," said Dr. Williams, "and every time I look at it, something says, 'You had an opportunity to speak for Christ to a soul who needed you, and you failed."

I wonder if that's not true of many of us. We need to let the church become an operations base through which we reach for other persons. Then the price God paid for it will not have been in vain, and we ourselves will have some justification for being alive in this day.

III

If we're to make the most of our church we should let it be a maintenance base, an operations base, but also an emergency base. This is where the airlines take care of the disastrous things that happen and the failure of a plane in a critical time. The words "emergency base" call forth a picture which needs no further explanation.

It would be wrong to let the church be only an emergency base, but we must never forget that it can be this for us. There's no need of human life, no problem of the soul, no desperate hour for us which can't be handled better with the church. It's God's way of reaching and helping us when we need it most of all. It can determine whether or not our faith will be shattered or strengthened by the experience of life.

I'll never forget a young woman whom we found in our chapel one week day. When I stood beside her she said, "I'm sorry, I shouldn't have come here" "Why not?" I asked. "Because I'm not worthy," she answered. "I've failed and made a mess of things. And a few minutes ago, I left an office and started running, and I didn't know where to go, so I came here." And then I tried to assure her that she had every right to come, indeed, that the church was for the likes of her in a special way. It's the plan of God: somewhere to go when we need Him most, somewhere to go go in the desperate hour and the time of emergency. For at the church it's easier for us to hear Him saying:

Fear not, I am with Thee, O be
not dismayed,
For I am thy God and will still
give Thee aid:
I'll strengthen thee, help thee,
and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous omnipotent hand.

Perhaps we ought to put it like this: be careful where you go when it gets dark, when the clouds close in, for it may make all the difference in the world for the rest of your life. You see, if we are to make the most of it, the church which he hath purchased with his own blood must always be an emergency base for us.

For almost everyone who has anything to do with the church, it is the place where the sacred ceremonies of life are performed, and it's the

lace of worship and learning and ellowship. But if this is all the church eans, then we're missing so much f the glory and wonder which God tended and for which he paid so igh a price. In a sense we're merely aking the best of it, when we should o on to make the most of it. For the church can be for each of us a maintenance base, an operations base, and an emergency base.

Perhaps it would help if over the entrance-way to every church we were to place a sign which read, "This is the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood!"

THE CHURCH THEN AND NOW

Theodore P. Ferris, Trinity Church, Boston, Massachusetts

Today we are celebrating the hurch's birthday. Just as on the ourth of July we will celebrate the irth of this nation, so on this fiftieth ay after Easter we celebrate the irth of the Christian Church. The irst thing we do on a person's birthay is to thank God that the person vas born. So, today the first thing hat we do is to thank God that the hurch was born, that the scattered ollowers of Jesus were gathered ogether and given both the will and he power to continue his ministry n the world.

We know that the church has often ailed to live up to its possibilities. We now that the pages of its history are ften black. We know that it has been he persecutor as well as the perecuted. But in spite of all these hings, when we stop to think what he world would be like, and what ur own personal lives would be like, without the Christian Church, we hank God that the church was born. ndeed, we could spend this whole ermon praising and thanking God for he glorious things the church has one in the world, for what it has neant to the world, and to us, peronally. But I should like on this particular birthday of the church to lo something a little more searching.

When a man has a birthday, he is lmost sure to look backward, not nly to the particular day on which ie was born, but to the place where ie was born, the era he was born in, he neighborhood in which he was aised, and then he moves forward through the years and looks at himself as he now is, sees how far he has come, how far he might have come, how much he has made out of what he was given, and he then looks forward and wonders what the future may hold for him. Why shouldn't we do the same thing on the birthday of the church? Therefore, the subject of our thought this morning is **the church, then and now.**

I

The church then was **small,** hardly more than a handful of people, meeting in a single room, in one city of the world, in a conquered nation. The church now is **larger.** The latest statistical report that I could find tells us that there are approximately 742,000,000 Christians in the world, and they are to be found in almost every part of the world. An acorn grows into a tremendous tree. A baby boy or girl grows into a man or woman. The thirteen colonies hugging the seacoast grew into the forty-eight states, stretched from sea to sea. So the church, being a healthy organism, grew from a small movement in Judaism to a worldwide fellowship of all sorts and conditions of people.

The question that came to my mind as I thought about this was, What made it spread so fast? I put down three things which to my mind at least partly account for the tremendous and rapid growth of the church. They are worth thinking about for, if they are the cause of growth in the past, they may be the clue to growth in the future. The first

reason why the church spread so fast is that there was something irresistible about Jesus. He drew men to him. The learned, the ignorant, the rich and the poor, Easterners and Westerners, all sorts of people. Not everyone, to be sure; but few people who know anything about him can completely ignore him. He drew men to him by the quality of his life, a quality not of this world, yet not in any way alien to this world. That is the first thing. And the church will never grow in the world unless his personality is so clearly revealed to people that the irresistibility of it will be obvious to all.

Second, there was something enormously appealing about his followers. Not all of them, I am sure, but many of them. Christians have not been a hundred percent perfect, then or now. As far as we can see, they never will be. But there was something about them that caught the attention of the pagan world. For one thing, they loved one another in a way that other people didn't. And they had something that made it possible for them to manage life in a way other people couldn't manage it. They could take trouble the way other people couldn't. They had something to live for that other people didn't have. This was something people wanted, and one of the reasons the church spread so rapidly was that the followers of Jesus had something enormously appealing about them. It is safe to say that the church will grow only to the degree that our lives commend it to the serious consideration of the world.

And the third reason was that there was something crucial in the teaching of the church. The church went to the pagan world and said, "Christ is the Way." It did not modify that. It did not try to make it easier for people to accept it by saying, "Christ is one of the ways, one among many; you can choose which one suits you best; we think this is a good way and for us it is the best way, but there are many other ways; take your choice." The church did not say that. The church, when it has been at its strongest, has always said, "Christ is **the** Way, and all the other ways to the degree to which they find God are somehow caught up in this one way, thus making Christianity not an option, not something you can take or leave, but something which you decide against to your peril." And this made a great appeal to the pagan world. It gave them something definite to believe, and something sure to pin their hopes on. This either-orness of the church's message bothers many a broadminded person today, but before he lightly discards it let him remember that he need not be proud, arrogant, or intolerant of others in order to say that he has come to the ultimate dividing line in life, and that in Christ he has found something with which all other things will ultimately have to come to terms.

II

The church then was **united.** The story in the Acts reports that "they were all with one accord in one place." Not only were they all under one roof, but they were all bound together in one life. "And all that believed were together and had all things in common." They shared not only their beliefs and their affections, but their property. Their whole life was a life in unison with Christ. Now the church is **divided.** There are three great divisions — the Roman Catholic, the Eastern Orthodox, and the Protestant. And Protestanism, we are sorry to say, is divided into something like two hundred or more separate churches. We not only no longer live under one roof, we do not live one life in the same sense that they did in those earlier days. In each congregation there are individuals, and no one can say that even in the most closely-knit congregation we live a common life and share all we have with one another.

This, too, is what you might expect. For as an organism grows, it almost

inevitably becomes more complex. A child's life is infinitely simpler and more single than a man's life. And as a man's life progresses, and as his loyalties and interests increase, they are often likely to be conflicting rather than uniting. In the same way, we can say that the thirteen colonies in 1776 were, perhaps, more closely united than the forty-eight states are at the present time. Their life now is infinitely more complicated than it was then, and the complications are bound to create divisions; there are divisions between the North and the South, the East and the West; labor and capital, and so forth and so on. So the church as it grows is bound to lose, it seems to me, at least some of its original simplicity and singleness.

As it ministers to more and more people coming from different cultures and backgrounds, it will inevitably minister to them in different ways, because not all people are like. A worldwide church must be prepared to minister to Catholics and Quakers, and to all who are in between. I, for one, thank God for the diversity that now exists in the modern church. For to my mind, no one person, and no one church is big enough to grasp the totality of the Gospel of God. We see it from our own particular angle, and we minister to people who see it from the same angle. And I am thankful that there is in the Christian Church the richness of diversity which makes it possible for some to approach God by way of the Roman Catholic Mass and others by the way of the silence of a Quaker Meeting.

On the other hand, I ask God's pardon and forgiveness for the divisiveness that now exists in the Christian Church. And divisiveness is always the result of pride. You can have diversity without divisiveness, but you cannot have it if one part of the church says, "I am the Church and there is no other Church besides me." Complexity as we grow, yes, but not competition. And I am just as sure of this as I am that it will be night when the sun sets, that the church in our time will miss its opportunity if it cannot scrap its denominational pride and lose itself in devotion to its one Lord and Master.

III

The third and last contrast between the church then and now is less flattering to the church of the present day. The church then was **on fire.** St. Luke, as he described the first Pentecost, did it in terms of wind and fire. There were tongues of fire which came down from above and "sat upon each of them." That is a figurative way of saying what everybody knew, that those early Christians were enthusiastic, full of vitality and concern, and were ready for anything because what had happened to them had done such tremendous things for them. Then as the account of the first Pentecost goes on, we find out this, that the behavior of Christians, that little group in the Upper Room, was such that some people could attribute their behavior to the fact that they had had too much wine to drink. And when Peter stood up before the whole crowd to make his famous Pentecost address, the first thing he did was to explain that these people were not drunk with wine (after all, it was only nine o'clock in the morning, he pointed out) but that they were intoxicated with the Spirit of God. He quoted one of the Prophets: "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh." They were excited; they were enlarged; they were exhilarated; they were full of vitality and energy; they were free; they were not tied up in knots with inhibitions; they were ready to live. And this, said Peter, is the intoxication that may look to some like the intoxication that comes from alcohol but which comes from the Holy Spirit and is, therefore, quite a different kind of thing. The inner life is released by alcohol from all responsibility, whereas the Spirit releases the inner life **for** responsibility.

It is hard to imagine, at least it is for me, many Christian congregations

behaving today with so much joy and exhilaration that the scoffers might have some excuse for saying that they had had too much to drink. Our congregations are more often characterized by the long face, the set jaw, the blank look, and the indifferent air. This is not true of every congregation, thank God, but it is true of enough of the church to warrant our saying that whereas the church then was "on fire," about the most you can say for the church now is that it is smouldering, and to smoulder means to burn or smoke without flame.

Just three comments that I would like to make on this situation. First, it is almost impossible for any movement to keep its first, fine, careless rapture. I imagine that the people in 1776, who died for the independence of this country, had a rapture about democracy that not many modern Americans have, although if a crisis should arise, we might be surprised how that rapture would come back. This is not to be wondered at, it seems to me. In the case of anything that is new, the very novelty of it generates an excitement that cannot be continued endlessly through the centuries. That is the first comment.

The second follows upon it very closely. If any movement loses entirely the power to recapture that first, fine, careless rapture, it is dead. I leave it to you to apply this to the Christian Church, but it goes without saying that no matter how full our churches may be, no matter how large our offerings are, no matter how much good work we are doing, if the church loses, that is, if individuals themselves lose the power to recapture that first, fine, careless rapture of a people who have found liberation in Christ, found the doors of the future and the ways of life opened for the first time, if we can never recapture that, we are dead.

The third comment is that the church has not lost that power. There are people brought into the church today who have found the same thing that Paul the Apostle found. And while they may not have the genius of expression that he had, nevertheless, if you talk to them, you will find them saying the same thing, that they have been set free by the fellowship of the church through which God has come to them. For example, I had a letter from an elderly woman whom I have never seen, thanking me for the ministry through the radio. At the end of the letter this is what she said, "This is all so new to me, after my floundering so many years, and not knowing where I was at, but still longing for something. I have it now and I pray that it will never leave me." That is the first, fine, careless rapture in an old life. And I think you might be surprised if I asked those who have had that, even for a single day, to stand up. I think those who are not involved in the ministry of the church would be surprised how many there would be who would get on their feet and say that to some degree something had happened to them which was similar to the thing that happened to people back there almost two thousand years ago, that was like flames of fire resting upon their heads.

If you are looking for signs of life in the church, don't look at the buildings, or the budgets, or the good works; see if you can find a person who is walking on his toes with excitement and joy. If you can find one in a congregation, that congregation is alive. On the birthday of the church, therefore, we thank God for what the church is. We thank Him that it was born, that it came into the world and stayed in the world. And we ask Him to make it grow; to draw it together in real unity. And above everything else, to set it on fire.

A CHURCH ON THE MOVE

Eugene R. Moore, Orrick Christian Church, Orrick, Missouri

I opened recently the noon edition of the Kansas City Star and a sermon hit me in the face. There on the front page was a picture of a church about the size of our church. What was so unusual about this church and the reason it spoke to me so clearly was that this was no ordinary church at all; it was a church on wheels and it was going places. The name of the church was St. Mark's Episcopal Church, and it was cautiously being eased across the Black River bridge near Springfield, Vermont, toward a new and better location. Here, as the caption beneath the picture indicated, was truly "A Church on the Move!"

Now I want to ask you a very pointed question. Is our church a Church on the Move? Or is it a stationary church? Is ours a church rolling out onto the highways and bridges of the world on wheels of commitment, enthusiasm, dedicated membership? Is ours a church pushed outward and onward and upward by the selfless, sacrificial living of those who carry a cross for the Master? Is it a Church on the Move? Or is it nailed down to foundations of indifference, traditionalism, contentment? Is ours a church that goes with us into our living and working, our playing and praying, our earning and spending, our sorrowing and laughing? Or is it a building sitting immobile on Front Street, a place where we come on Sunday mornings only to leave it there the rest of the week, a stationary and cold thing, lifeless, with lights out and heat off, and doors locked, a place waiting for us to return another Sunday? What kind of church do we have?

I

A Church on the Move moves out on to the Damascus Road!! The people who comprise this kind of church move out and head toward Damascus and, like Paul, wake up to the vision of Christ's call. Here is a man with a purpose, at first the wrong purpose. Here is Paul, starting out, self-righteous, wrapped up in his own ways, so convinced that his is the only way of life that all he can do is fight anything and everything which opposes it, and so he is a persecutor of Christians. But the living Christ who seems to be dead in the stationary church has a way of coming to life on the Damascus Road, very much as Christ did to Paul that day he travelled it. The living, burning Christ burst in upon Paul's world and turned it upside down, wrongside out. It put Paul's desires and selfish ambitions on the outside of his life and it put Christ's desires and Godlike ambitions in the center. His was a true conversion.

Has conversion meant that to our lives? Has it happened to us as a church? How many of us here associate conversion with replacing our selfish wills and ambitions with that of Christ's and doing whatever he asks us to do? Conversion for too many of us seems to stop with getting our names on the church rolls. It becomes a formality, without Christ really doing anything to our deepest desires. That's why we have so many more church members than we have Christians; they are not propelled by the spirit of Christ. This is the very beginning of this matter of putting the church on the move having something happen in the hearts, the minds, the lives of church members that makes them want to push the church out beyond the church building itself.

I challenge this church to move out on the Damascus Road and catch the true vision of Christ that Paul caught. I call each of you to be a Christ-filled Christian, pouring out love and prayer and new life into this church so that it will overflow into our community and the world. We

can never hope to get our church on the move unless we do. The change must happen in your minister, in our elders, our deacons, our teachers, and every member we can reach. We'll have to take the blindfolds off our eyes and the cotton from our ears, so that we may see and hear what Christ is asking us to do. I am dedicating myself with all my life and power to live the rest of my days on the Damascus level, and I pray that you will do the same. Everyone of us needs to stop fooling around with this Christianity of ours, roll up our sleeves, and get down to the real business of Christ. I know that with God's help we can build a great church. It will take all the faith we can muster. Will you do it? Will you let God have whatever may be holding you back, let him destroy it, and follow where the Holy Spirit leads you? That's what Paul did, you remember. He confronted Christ there on the Damascus Road and he became a changed man. No longer was he interested in doing what he wanted to do. He looked up from the ground level of his new humility, up into the high call of Christ, and he cried out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" And from that moment he let nothing stand in his way to accomplish the will of Christ.

II

A Church on the Move must then go on to travel the Jericho Road. You can't have a church that is spiritually awake to the vision and will of Christ without moving out on the road. It is the famous road of the Good Smaritan, the road where a "certain man" traveling it fell among thieves, according to the story Jesus told, and was wounded and left to die. The way the other travelers reacted to that certain man's needs is exactly an illustration of the way we react today as we travel it. We, too, see a "certain man," wounded, robbed and left to die. Who is he? He alone is not some unfortunate individual who may have been beaten and robbed by gangsters and left to die on Highway 210. He is a symbol of any number of people. That "certain man" is your neighbor wherever he might be; he is a child of God in need and the church is to help him. He is the man and woman you failed to phone last week to invite to church. He is the little boy playing ball out in the vacant lot this very moment, denied the invitation to be where he can learn how to play ball with God. He is the parents who sent their youngsters to Sunday School this morning, who waited outside in their cars to pick them up, and then went home instead of to worship God as a grateful family. That "certain man" on the Jericho Road is the old couple across town and the younger one up in the hills who have been left there wounded and robbed of the full life in Christ by bandits of neglect and embarrassment. He is the favorite customers of the tavern down the road, those who are obsessed by the thirst of alcohol instead of the thirst for Christ. He is the man who would rather keep his business doors open for customers on Sunday mornings than open his heart's door to the business of Christ. He is the missionary in the Belgian Congo, left with such slim rations that the program of Christ suffers amid thousands of hungry, diseased, illiterate people. He is a sickly, underfed Korean child who lost his mother and father in the war and cries for milk and love. He is the orphan in St. Louis, the old people in Jacksonville and Columbia, the shut-ins, the hospitalized, the imprisoned, all those who consciously and unconsciously call out for help along the way. He is our neighbor and we are to love him as we love ourselves.

Could it be that our church is more like the Priest and Levite in the story Jesus told than like the Good Samaritan? The Priest and Levite did nothing to help the wounded man; they passed him by on the other side. Theirs was a stationary church, left behind somewhere in a building or in

a set of laws or rituals, blind to the needs of the Jericho Road. Theirs was a spectators' religion, nothing more than something provided to entertain them, make them comfortable, happy, and good in the eyes of God. Like our TV give-away programs, they answer the right questions and God gives them the prize. This, I tell you frankly, was not the religion of the Good Samaritan. He was not blind to the needs along Jericho. His church was right with him. He was not the spectator of a drama; he was its hero. His was not to get a prize from God; his was to give the prize of God.

A Church on the Jericho Road is a Church for Sinners. I challenge you with all my strength to put a sign over your hearts reading "Sinners, welcome!" I challenge you to go out on the Jericho highways and byways as a church and bring them in. O how the objections will be raised when we do that!! But even the Priest and Levites and Pharisees of Jesus' day objected when Jesus did the very same thing. But this is the heart of our religion. Jesus' main purpose in coming into the world, remember, was "to seek and to save that which was lost."

And let me add this; a church moving out on the Jericho Road must also become a Church of the Giving Spirit. I challenge you to hang that sign over your hearts and pocketbooks, too. No longer does the moving church try to run its traveling expenses on a shoestring. No longer is its treasury so little supported that it lives from week to week in fear of overdrawing its account. The Church of the Giving Spirit is filled with members who are dedicated, consecrated stewards of God. Theirs is a boundless giving, not measured in terms of nickels and dimes, but by the love of meeting the needs of the children of God along the Jericho Road beyond its physical reach, yea, into the far countries of the prodigals. Its mission program is not a solo sung by a small group of women in the church; it is a chorus sung by all, a theme song, a marching song for a whole congregation of dedicated, moving Christians, going out where Christ wants them to go.

III

And then a Church on the Move travels the most costly road of all, the Calvary Road. This is the proving ground for the church, for here the church is asked to pick up a cross and go all the way. Stationary churches do not travel this road; the only cross they can boast is one they put on a table in their sanctuary or on top of their steeple for show. They lag behind where it is safe, while the diminishing crowds go forward.

Our church has tried to go forward with Christ. How far shall we go? Our Lord always walks along ahead of us as our Leader and Guide, and he always has a crowd behind him. Today that crowd contains more people and churches than at any other time in history. But as Jesus walks the Calvary Road and asks us to follow him, the crowd has a way of diminishing. Jesus turns his head and he looks back at us and he wonders how far we will go. And then he speaks: "If anyone comes after me who does not hate his father and his mother and his wife and children and his brothers and his sisters, yea, even his own life, he cannot be my disciples." This Jesus is speaking to us. If anyone puts anything in front of the cause for which Jesus died, he cannot follow him on the Calvary Road and his church cannot follow. If anyone lets his business, his family, his home, his pleasures, his vices, his obligations financial or otherwise, continuously keep him from doing what in his heart he knows he ought to do to move his church in that direction, he is not worthy. And with that, the crowd becomes smaller; many people, many churches drop back. But Jesus goes on talking: "The person who is not willing to take up his share of my cross and walk in my direction, he cannot be my

disciple." Having spoken, Jesus walks on toward Calvary, and the crowd becomes smaller and smaller, for some want a stationary church, not a moving one, especially if it moves toward a cross.

Putting a church on the Calvary Road is more than having its members walk down a center aisle and say that they believe in him. It is more than getting names on church rolls. I wish I could tell you that it involves only things like coming to church and Sunday School regularly or becoming a deacon or a teacher or a preacher; but I cannot! I wish I could tell you that the success of the church could be measured as the world measures success, by size, financial ratings, the number of members; but I cannot. "If any man would come after me," says Jesus, "let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." If you want a moving church, Jesus is saying, you've got to take me seriously. You've got to quit thinking about yourself all the time and your own secret appetites, putting pride and luxuries and amusements foremost in your ambitions. You've got to turn from yourself and take on the problems and woes and the sufferings of others, take them on voluntarily as a church team, take them on daily, no matter the cost. You've got to become obsessed with it, lost in it. Your time and your money and your prayers and devotion must be lost in it with reckless abandon. You've got to give yourself to the high endeavor for which Christ died, and let it lift you out of your instinctively way of living. It will not be easy, Jesus is saying: "I came not to bring peace, but a sword." You may have to face the mobs on Good Friday as I did, and Pilate may sentence you, too; but it will be worth it! For there is something eternal in bearing up under a cross like that. It centers around the very love you have in your heart when you follow the Master. The more you follow him, the more love you have. The more you forget yourself, the greater that love within you flows from you in a demonstration of what God will do. From the moment you discover that great truth, you will feel the strength and love of God's everlasting arms beneath you, bearing you up to give you a crown of glory on some resurrection morn of your own.

The question we began with was, Do we have a Church on the Move? I think now the question should be changed: Do you want a Church on the Move? If you do want one you can have it. Just reach out with your right hand and say, "Lord, here's my hand; now lead me and I'll follow." And then reach out with your left hand, and say, "Allright, preacher, here's my other hand. Show me how to do it!"

WORTH QUOTING

E. Paul Hovey, The Federated Churches, Lewiston, Idaho

It is said that the differences in standard of living cause more disunity in the Church around the world than differences in theology. It is said that the belittling of men of different races causes more dissension than tanks and bombs. It is said that it will be the laity rather than the clergy or missionary who can save the world. It is said that the Christian gospel proclaims hope for all people and the full release of their varied gifts and latent spirit. If these be true statements, then all of us should ever seek to know more and more the needs of our world and the Christian forces to meet these needs.

— Margaret Shannon

* * *

A man is tallest on his knees. In that position he stretches clear up into heaven itself. The man who most nearly brings his life into complete harmony with God, is the one who excels, as the servant of God. We are all equal before that test. No

one has any advantage over any other and we may be sure that the humblest among us may avail as much as any other in our efforts to tap the power of God and apply it to the redemption and salvation of the world. — Howard E. Kershner

* * *

The principal business of the individual is to grow, to develop through the use of his stewardship toward ultimate at-one-ment with God.

— Alfred P. Haake

* * *

Communication is a concern near to the heart of God. The Word became flesh expresses the central faith of millions who believe that Jesus Christ was God's way of communicating His loving concern for the world. Communication of this very good news is now, and always has been, the concern of the Christian Church.

— Margaret Shannon

* * *

Men's lives, like rivers, become crooked from following the paths of least resistance.

* * *

What is the use of running, if you are not on the right road? — Ray Kearns

* * *

Too many people are thinking of security instead of opportunity, they seem more afraid of life than of death. — James F. Byrnes

* * *

Freedom often appears to be more desirable as a concept than as an actuality. Men who have it begrudge the effort that maintaining it requires.

— **Nation's Business**

* * *

"We need the everlasting cooperation of every blooming soul," said Kipling. God forgive our complacency. We need to be our best when the world is at its worst . . . Men need to take knowledge that we have been with Him. We need to be matched to the hour and equal to its demands. We can do all things through Christ. Never belong to a league of defeated souls. — Ray Kearns

Two went to pray? Oh, rather say
One went to brag, the other to pray;
One stands up close and treads on high
Where the other dares not send his eye;
One nearer to God' altar trod
The other to the altar's God.

— Richard Crashaw

* * *

Sunday was like any other day in the new town that had no church. "Let's go back home," a child coaxed, "where God is."

* * *

John T. Cathers, a reporter for the Allentown, Pa., **Call-Chronicle** . . . recently asked President Syngman Rhee this question: "If my little son, aged 11, was sitting by your side what words of encouragement could you give him that the world he will soon enter will be one of hope and promise?"

President Rhee replied: "My boy, your country is today the freest, the richest and the most powerful on earth. You have the greatest of gifts that can be given to a young man or woman: unlimited oportunity to do what you want to do, to make yourself what you wish. You drive a bus or be a fireman or doctor. Or you can pilot a space ship to the moon, or become a great scientist or statesman. The decision is yours, and no one is going to tell you what you must or must not do — provided you take care not to hurt other people or to prevent them from freely choosing what they want.

"This is part of what we call freedom. That you have it is no accident. It was fought for by your ancestors through many generations. A good many of them died so that you would be free.

Today a good deal of the world is not free, and the children there cannot choose what they wish to do and what they wish to be. This part of the world does not want any freedom anywhere. The few men who selfishly

rule in what we call the Communist part of our earth want to reserve all power for themselves, and above all to destroy your right to freedom because they know that as long as freedom exists anywhere, it is like a great epidemic that may sweep across the world and destroy them.

"Soon you will be a man, and as a citizen of the United States you will have the right and the duty to help your country make great decisions. I hope that you will learn all you can and make wise decisions, because the time is rapidly coming when you — like your ancestors — must defend what you have and must make sure that all others have it too. Once this freedom of yours is universal — once everyone has it — there will be no one left to want or to try to take it away.

"Most of the people of this world are good people, like your father and mother — like you. But there are some bad ones, and they must be punished and locked up, just as the police would do to a robber who entered your house and stole your property. When this has been done, there will be no more war and you can have a good and happy life and so can your children and their children — as the story books say, forever and ever."

— **Korean Survey**

* * *

If there must be economy, why take it out on those who can least afford it . . . If children could wait no one would say a word about cutting their training . . . Children cannot wait . . . Children's powers of learning must be used and directed when they are at full tide or their first fine power is lost forever. — Angelo Patri

* * *

I was helping one of our modern children to pack her trunk for camp, and I asked her if she wanted to take her Bible, lately presented by her Sunday school, to read while she was away. The child was eight, and she was truthful. She came up to me and almost whispered, in a confidential manner, "I don't want to hurt God's feelings, but the Bible is an awfully long book, isn't it?"

— Dora P. Chaplin

* * *

"I don't have time," is not a valid excuse. "I don't know time," would be better. When a man comes to himself, as one professor of history put it, he will know that time is what he makes of it. — Leonard Read

* * *

Don't ever worry about getting even with a man if you have to stoop to his level to do so. — Arthur W. A. Cowan

* * *

The man who regards his own life and that of his fellow creatures as meaningless is not merely unhappy but hardly fit for life. — Albert Einstein

* * *

We are living when anything can happen. That means the right thing can happen. — Paul Calvin Payne

* * *

Prayer is not important unless it is Christian prayer.

* * *

This letter was recently sent by Sally to John.

Dear John:

Words cannot express the deep regret I feel at having broken our engagement. Will you please come back to me? Your absence from my side leaves a void which no one can ever fill. Please forgive me and let us start again.

Your ever adoring,
Sally

P.S. Congratulations on winning the $64,000.00 Question.

Yes, people seem to love money today. The only trouble is, a lot of them don't seem to want to give very much, if anything to God, who, after all, is the Giver of all good things. Of course, God doesn't need the money Himself, but His churches do, and people also need to give for their own sakes. — E. J. Meurer

You do not decide whether you will
bond or free you only decide who
ur master will be.—David Dilworth

* * *

Life must always be a discipline;
is so dangerous that only by sub-
itting to some sort of discipline can
e become equipped to live in any
ue sense at all. — Havelock Ellis

* * *

When it comes to doing for others,
me people will stop at nothing.

* * *

Stop overestimating our achieve-
ents. Stop underestimating our cap-
ilities. — Ernest K. Lindley

* * *

Warring governments can make
ace simply by signing a treaty;
metimes the men who did the fight-
g take longer but achieve a more
ofound peace.

"I had sworn I would kill them all
I ever met them again," Ellis Gor-
n said of the Japanese guards who
d goaded him through four years
slave labor at a steel mill near
okohama. Captured on Wake Island,
e had wasted away to 101 pounds
fore V-J Day.

Last week, back in Japan to work
r a trucking firm, Gordon, now a
raying 60, returned to the steel mill
n Christmas Eve and accosted a bi-
cle-riding ex-guard named Seisaku
higuro. The Japanese gasped, turn-
d as if to run, then stopped when
ordon said: "I just want to be your
iend." The amazed Ishiguro bowed
low and called another ex-guard to
the reunion. Soon, six of the men
Gordon had once sworn to kill accept-
ed his invitation to share his Christ-
mas dinner . . .

And in Osaka, the naval flier who
led the air raid on Pearl Harbor made
his own peace. Ex-Capt. Mitsuo Fu-
chida, who became a Christian eight
years ago, said he would make a fly-
ing tour of the U.S. and Asia during
the coming year to preach sermons
against military use of the airplane.

—Newsweek

* * *

A cynic once said, "Good resolu-
tions are simply checks that men draw
on banks where they have no ac-
count." But good deeds are solid gold
that men put into banks that com-
pound interest every day.

* * *

Both the intelligence and the per-
sonality of the average man function
far better under favorable conditions
than adverse ones. This obvious but
important principle is ignored or only
half-realized by parents, teachers, dis-
ciplinary and correctional institutions,
municipal, state and national officials,
every day in the week. Science has
now offered us the final, urgent rea-
son why we should put our collective
brains to work and give the maximum
amount of training, useful experience,
security and a sense of power and
success to every member of the rising
generation. — Bruce Bliven in **The
Men Who Make the Future**

OOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING

from page 2

Faces of the Twelve" and "Faces of
h words, maps, and pictures. This
olume, which ought to delight any
acher, is comprehensive in scope
nd possesses the great value of thirty
ew maps, a detailed time chart, and
wide selection of excellent photo-
raphs. (C. S. Hammond & Co., 192
p., $5.95) **The Christ of the Early
hristians** by William M. Ramsey
xamines the book of Acts in a persua-
ive effort to determine what prim-
itive Christianity considered Christ
to be and to represent. Their exalt-
ation of Christ, as recorded by the
historian Luke, gave an understand-
ing to which the Church has ever
clung. (John Knox Press, 163 pp.,
$3.00) **Faces about the Christ** by
Holmes Rolston presents forty-two
vivid and inspirational, Biblically-
grounded interpretations under major
headings such as "Faces about the
Manger," "Faces along the Way,"

the Passion Week." (**John Knox Press,** 215 pp., $3.50)

Two new books concern matters in which every pastor has an immediate interest. **From Teens to Marriage** by Reuben B. Behlmer is written for teen-age folks, comprehends their situations, and illuminates their paths. Every facet of their experience is briefly mentioned, especially the preparation for and understanding of marriage. (Concordia Publishing House, 112 pp., $1.95) Of real significance is **Venture of Faith, A Guide to Marriage and the Home,** by Dr. and Mrs. Harold Blake Walker. Written in a congenial and knowing manner, this book draws upon a sound and judicious experience to offer suggestions — the book is more than a guide — by which the various experiences in marriage may be met creatively and with genuine spiritual profit. (Harper & Brothers, 177 pp., $3.00)

The Christian Shepherd by Seward Hiltner is a wise and stimulating volume on pastoral care. Drawing from an enviable experience and observation, the author makes meaningful the word "shepherding" in terms of the gospel and of the pastor's relations with all manner of people in all kinds of situations. (Abingdon Press, 190 pp., $3.00)

The republication of John Calvin's **Tracts and Treaties,** with a new preface by Thomas F. Torrance, brings into the pastor's study the primary sources upon which his understanding and interpretation should be based. Volume I is titled "On the Reformation of the Church"; Volume II, "On the Doctrine and Worship of the Church"; and Volume III, "In Defense of the Reformed Faith." These volumes, which are generously indexed, are from the edition of the Calvin Translation Society. (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1500 pp., $6.00 per volume)

SYMBOLS OF FAITH from page 2

among the 400 forms of the cross we would single out the papal cross with its three horizontal bars. The cross is so widely accepted in all denominations that it is the symbol of the Christian faith as a whole. At the same time, it is not the symbol of any other religion.

The cross is a symbol of God's love for sinful man as revealed by Jesus Christ on Calvary. Here the doctrine of the sinfulness of man is in order. Everyone had gone astray, like sheep eating and nibbling without looking up. The Jewish leaders and Roman court and soldiers combined their efforts and Christ was crucified. This was a revelation of how sinful man really is!! At the same time it is a revelation of the greatness of God's love: He prayed for forgiveness for those who didn't know what they were doing.

The cross is a symbol of triumphant hope. Christ will draw all men unto Himself. Paradise is opened by our Lord.

The significance of the three steps at the foot of the cross may be found in I Corinthians 13:13, where in carefully worded sequence the Apostle Paul points to faith, hope, and love, the greatest being love. The bottom part of the cross refers to love, for everything rests on that.

Designed like a flower with four petals, the quatrefoil at the center of some Calvary crosses refers mainly to the four Gospels, the source books on Jesus.

At the center of the quatrefoil we find the letters I H S, constituting a sacred monogram of Jesus. It is not necessary now to consider later and less-important interpretations of this monogram, for our main object is to remember that Jesus, who died on the cross when He gave His life for us all, now reigns forever as our living Saviour.

WESLEY P. FORD
GENE E. BARTLETT
HOMER J. R. ELFORD
ROBERT SUMNER JACKSON
PHILLIPS PACKER ELLIOTT

CHRIST-CENTERED LIVING

HIS I BELIEVE ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Wesley P. Ford, Central Christian Church, Pasadena, California

In speaking of man the range of e is infinite. It is a long way from e savage-like murderer to the self-ving of a Dr. Schweitzer. Many fact-s contribute to the difference, not e least of which is Jesus Christ. sus has been proclaimed the great-t single moral incentive. Good men ve found in him both motive and thod.

How do we possess the power for od that he offers? The Christian e is not a gift; it comes only by an's choice. Some, like Paul, have perienced a sudden conversion, but r many it is a long gradual process. either instance the result is a rela-nship to a person that transforms e. The spirit of Christ possessed e first Christians until they were ade over men and felt ready to ake over society. So great has been e influence for good of men called hristians that we must face the eaning of the impact of Christ upon dividual lives.

I

First, the Christian life begins in new outlook. This new life calls one repentance, and to repent literally eans to change your mind. That is ard. We have sometimes substituted joining the church" for changing the ind. Uniting with the church is im-ortant, but the test is to have this ind in you which was in Christ. sus stretched his mind until he ought like God. He knew and need-d the prophet's injunction: "My oughts are not your thoughts, neith-r are your ways my ways," says the ord. "For as the heavens are higher an the earth, so are my ways higher an your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

What one sees is determined by the state of his mind. This is true even concerning "the facts of the case" which the practical man marshals. "Those who live according to the flesh," said Paul, "set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the spirit, set their minds on the things of the spirit." Jesus rebuked Peter because he was thinking only on the level of man and not like God. Our bifocals too readily limit us to things of the flesh. The Christian life sees the things of the spirit with vision clear.

Look briefly at just two areas. One is what we call success. Much of the time we see success as meaning to have things, a good job and a shiny car, and to be popular. Jesus, from God's point of view said, "He that will be greatest will be your servant." Success through the mind of Christ! And another, being earth-bound we are like the blind man who said, "I see men but they look like trees." Sometimes men look to us like misfits, or foreigners, or colored, or as wearing some other label. In contrast looking through the eyes of God, Jesus saw in every man the handiwork of God, a potential saint. The Christian life begins in a new outlook. It is the mind of Christ at work in a man until he sees all from God's point of view.

II

Second, I believe the Christian life is oriented around a single purpose. Here is not a straight jacket to restrain one, but rather an adventure to summon and release his whole energy. The Christian has made a vow, he

has pledged his allegiance, and he has a principal purpose from which he will not be moved. The Christian life says, "This one thing I do."

Such is not to imply that we abandon home and business or even recreation. It calls us instead to do all to the glory of God. Nothing will do more to bless a home than to make Christ its center. And the primary purpose of business or profession is not to make money. It is to serve God through serving men honorably. The Christian gives money to glorify God, but he also earns his money glorifying God. The church is weakened and Christian influence is lessened because we miss the point of a single purpose. The church is in constant competition for the time and talent of its members who are caught in a whirl of activity. One thing we must learn: the Christian life has neither strength nor time nor money for everything that everybody does! The Christian has found the pearl of great price and so relinquishes good pearls of lesser value that he might possess it.

Jesus was not a joiner. Abiding by his own counsel, he travelled light. "If any one would come after me let him deny himself." This is the Christian life. It denies itself for the sake of the principal purpose. How hard it is to enter the kingdom when weighed down with everybody's program and interest. "This one thing I do."

III

Third, I believe the Christian life is a life of faith. Jesus had a child-like trust in God. He had transferred his interest to the things of heaven, and where his interest was there was his treasure. Now he trusted heaven's bank rather than the things of earth. This is faith's great leap! To put one's trust in the treasures of earth is to keep one's self earth-minded, but to trust in the things of the spirit is to be spirit-filled.

Because he was not limited to earth's bank account, Jesus was free to draw on his faith in God and so to move forward to accomplish the impossible. For him it was not necessary to see the end from the beginning. If the goal was right, the outcome could be left to God. In contrast to such a trust we do not go forward unless prepared for every emergency and, therefore, so often, we do not go forward.

In 1843, a member of the United States Senate, speaking of a proposed trans-continental railroad to the Oregon Territory, said, "To talk about constructing a railroad to the western shores of this continent manifests a wild spirit of adventure which I never expected to hear broached in the Senate of the United States." That is one way to look at the facts. There they were — plains and mountains and limited resources. But two things were not listed with the facts: vision and faith. Even in the affairs of the kingdom those who come with only the facts forget heaven's resources. Jesus altered the facts to match the promises of God. Fear not, it is the Father's pleasure to give you the kingdom. The Christian life trusts God.

IV

Fourth, I believe the Christian life reveals itself in conduct. There is a bit of comfort in knowing that one is not responsible for all the sins of the world. But the Christian knows there is one life for whose conduct he is responsible. His major assignment is to make Christ-like the one life entrusted to his care. Here, too, we remember Christ. Jesus never sought to get even, he never sought revenge, and he would not injure even one who did him wrong. We justify conduct saying, "We must look out for ourselves." In contrast, Jesus spent his life looking out for others.

Christ-like conduct is a higher way and it is often a costly way, but it offers hope both to oneself and others. The Christian is concerned with what his conduct means in his own life and also with what it means to God and

s purpose. While Lord Northington as Prime Minister of England he ffered an attack of gout and, for a me, could not walk. "If I had own," he said, "these old legs would e day carry a Prime Minister of ngland, I would have taken better re of them." The Christian life re- aes its conduct because it bears wit- ss to Jesus Christ. If I knew that spoke for God! So the Christian alks with care.

V

Fifth, I believe the Christian life d finds strength in fellowship. Some ve known the isolation of imprison- ent and others the confinement of sease; but even these are not alone. he Christian is surrounded by more an a handful of contemporary iends. The Book of Hebrews calls e roll of men of faith. Naming the roes of the years, Abraham, Moses, d others, it adds, "Seeing we are rrounded by so great a cloud of itnesses, let us lay aside every sin." hen one walks the high road he ay seem to be alone, but he is sur- unded by hundreds who have gone efore and is strengthened by the knowledge that others will follow. And as one seeks to be loyal to the spirit and purpose of Christ, he hears a voice say, "Lo, I am with you always."

Jesus sought to bring all men into one inclusive fellowship. So inclusive was his goal that even in crucifixion he said to a criminal. "Today you will be with me . . ." In the presence of God the Christian shares fraternity unlimited. "I, if I be lifted up will draw all men . . ." Though the crowd may reject his high way and compel him to walk apart, the Christian knows the joy of a great cloud of witnesses and of an eternal companionship.

This I believe about the Christian life: it begins in a new outlook, let this mind be in you; it is oriented to a single purpose, this one thing I do; it is a life of faith, I will trust and will not be afraid; it issues in Christ-like conduct, I am the way; and it is a life of fellowship, we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. The Christian life is hard, but not so hard as its rejection. And if you will not walk this way, to whom will you go? This is the way that leads of life.

UR SEARCH FOR SIGNIFICANCE

Gene E. Bartlett, First Baptist Church, Los Angeles, California

There was a movie in the mood of omedy which appeared some years go. It told of a young woman who ne day, looking out of the window f the office where she worked, saw ign painters putting an advertise- ent on the building across the street. he began to imagine how her name ould look in such a sign. The day- ream became a decision. She decid- d that she would purchase the space nd simply have her name painted n it. So, she did. On the sign went er name. It gave her a great sense f satisfaction to see it. But in our dvertising world it began to cause ll kinds of complications. People ouldn't understand that all she want- ed to see was her name on the sign, and suspected many plots and plans. The story unfolds as you might suppose.

While few of us will go to such lengths, we may as well admit to ourselves we all need to have a feeling of significance.

The Bible itself speaks to that need and brings it to its highest fulfillment. Consider the story of the woman who lost the coin, the one out of ten. She wasn't content to say that she had nine left. She searched her house until she found the one, and then called in her neighbors to tell them the good news. "Even so," said Jesus, "I tell you, there will be

more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance."

Think of it! What a word that is! It speaks so deeply to our church for significance, to our hunger for the assurance that a man matters.

I

First, there is a word of assurance. Every life has significance and worth. Remember that the coin did not decrease in value because it was lost. The value of the coin rested upon the image that was stamped upon it and the worth which had been given it when it was made. Even so, your life and mine have an intrinsic worth. It was placed upon us by Him who who made us.

Now that is a tremendous belief, and it does not come easily in our kind of world. We know that we matter to ourselves. It is reflected in the turn of words which someone gave to Robert Burns' familiar lines.

Oh wad some power the giftie
gie us
To see oursels as others see us!

That is an important insight. But someone else turned it to read:

Oh wad some power to ithers gie
To see myself as I see me.

Moreover, we surely matter to each other. We do not just love in general; we love specifically. We would certainly understand the sign outside a village on the highway, urging people to drive carefully: "This town has no child to spare." That's the way we feel about each other in the personal relationships of life.

But beyond that how much are we worth? Sometimes a city seems to overwhelm us with its impersonality. We become not names but numbers. Yet, underneath it all, are we not still persons?

But still there is the deeper question. We can never really find our measure of peace until we have some word as to what significance we have before God. Here's the gospel word — every person is cherished like the one coin! But there are some stubborn facts in the world as we see it. That's a New Testament story which has to stand in a newspaper world. And in the real world as we face it, millions may die of starvation in a famine, or a single bomb may snuff out the lives of thousands of people at a single stroke. Hardly a day goes by that we do not see an apparent injustice when a good man carrying responsibility is taken while a drifting, heedless man is spared. How do we reconcile these undeniable facts of the newspaper world with the equally direct faith of the New Testament? Where is that God that seeks the one?

It is against just such a setting that the gospel becomes such good news. If these facts didn't exist, we would not need the gospel. We would not need the special word in Jesus Christ that we might have an answer to the doubts and anxieties which are bred in our kind of world. Is it not because these things do happen that God especially sent His word of assurance in Jesus Christ? He wanted us to know that His ways are not our ways, but they are always loving ways. He wanted us to know that there is a purpose beyond that which we can ask or see. He wanted us to have the word that though we only know in part, we are known, and He is working His purpose. It was because of the newspaper world that New Testament word became necesary. Because of the gospel we can understand that the poet was right when he said:

O, yet we trust that somehow
good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt and taints of
blood;
That nothing walks with aimless
feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile
complete.

Of course, that is not an easy faith.

here is only one way any man can old it; it is in taking Christ's word r it, taking that word against all the ther things that seem to deny it. hat's the good news. It speaks to : of the promise of significance and orth of every man.

II

There is another point we often iss. There is, moreover, a way of lfillment. It tells not only that the in had an intrinsic worth, but it minds us that the worth could never e fulfilled until it was found and vested. In short, the significance at God has given us must be fulfill- H by the way in which we invest ur lives.

There is a common quality in the gures of speech Jesus used to de- ribe the full life. They almost al- ays speak of something that had to e put to use. Not only was it the in that had to be spent or invested, was light which has to go into dark- ess, or leaven which has to be put to the loaf, or seed that must be laced in the ground, or salt that as meant to be used against the asteless. In short the goodness that hrist meant for a life was more than eing good for nothing, it was to be lated to the need with which we e surrounded.

There is a matter then of great sign- icance here. It can't be said too trongly that it literally makes all the ifference in the world if we can see . It is the very point that makes the ospel a good news. Stated most sim- ly, it is this: God has already endow- d us with significance and worth. ur purpose now is to live out that gnificance. Much of our striving to- ay is striving for something that will ake us feel significant. But that al- eady has been given. That is God's ift. Is this not written deep in His arables? The Prodigal did not go ome in the hope that he would be- ome a son. He went home because he was a son. The sheep was sought not because it might become a member of the flock, but because it already was. The coin was sought not because it could be of value. It was sought because it was already of value.

So Jesus Christ stands before many a striving, tense, anxious person today in the modern world saying, that significance, that worth, that sense of security for which you seek is yours as a gift of God. You already have that. Then try to live the rest of your years in such a way as to fulfill that worth and justify that gift.

When all is said and done, that surely is one of the real motives in any fulfilled life. Christ stands saying to every man, you have something to uphold. You have been made in the image of God. No matter how far you have gone from it, no matter how much sin may have blurred that image, Christ can restore it to your life. But His work in you will not be fulfilled until you begin to live worthily and significantly. Like the coin found you must then be invested and spent in the fulfillment of life.

Occasionally we read in the newspapers of someone who has come into unexpected inheritance. He learns that there has been left to him a title and lands in another country. Then he is faced with a decision. Will he accept it? Will he uproot his old life and take on a new? The title is his if he will accept it and make use of it. He must decide.

In far deeper ways that in part is the message of Christ to every life. You have been given an inheritance. God has given us His love, His fellowship, and the promise of His helping hand. He has endowed us with the dignity and worth of the sons of God. Will you accept it? Will you live it through? If so, your search for significance has come to an end. It has brought you to Jesus Christ.

THIS IS TO LIVE

Homer J. R. Elford, Trinity Methodist Church, Youngstown, Ohio

To Believe Is to Live

What we believe is important because it determines the way we live. Our beliefs provide us with motivating and sustaining ideas. Because men have dared to hold great beliefs until those beliefs held them, they have found courage and insight to make possible everything which we cherish today. From every respected authority we get the pronouncement that really happy, effective, healthy life is deeply related to the beliefs which we allow to become the basis for our outlook upon and our response to life. What we believe about ourselves, about other people and our relationships with them, and most important of all, what we believe about the fact of and the personal availability of the power of God, all constitute the only sound, basis for life. That is why we say that to believe is to live.

To Grow is to Live

There is much more to living than believing. Really to live requires growth; not only physical, but also mental, emotional and spiritual growth. In order really to mature, and thus be continually mastering the business of living life in its multitudinous relationships, we have to keep alert to new truth and seek to relate that truth to life as it confronts us at every point. We have to grow from irresponsibility to responsibility, from being self-centered people to other-centered people. As Dr. Overstreet puts it, "Any individual who is psychologically alive is, in a sense, a constant pioneer. He is striking out with his mind and emotions, on one road after another and, like all pioneers, he is setting himself to learn what he must learn if he is to feel at home in his new, broader environment." To that we add that anyone who is spiritually alive is also a constant pioneer, trying to find new ways to relate his life to the life of God through creative ties of love and service to others. Each day should find us rising to a greater spiritual stature. The joy which such growth brings helps us know that to grow is to live.

To Forgive Is to Live

One of the inescapable requirements laid upon the person who would build a maturing life upon solid beliefs is that of having a forgiving spirit. Hard as it may be to practice this distinctive Christian principle, we find that refusal to abide by this injunction, which Jesus made a part of his own experience, can lead to devastating ends. Hatred, resentment, guilt, shame, and anxiety can be driven out only with this spiritual antidote. By refusing to give hospitality to feelings of resentment — at least until we have learned all the facts and made sure some wrong has actually been committed against us — by giving the person who has offended us a real chance to set things right, by having a sincere desire to get right with our fellows and knowing that except we forgive others we dare not hope for God's forgiveness — we set aside ego and false pride and let the miraculous power of this Christian act put us and keep us in a position to experience life on its divine level. We know then that to forgive is to live.

To Suffer Is to Live

While some may feel it is more realistic to say "To live is to suffer" than to say "To suffer is to live," we find there are some great life-giving experiences which come only through pain. Physical, mental, social, and spiritual suffering, in some degree or form, come to each of us at one time or another. We do not believe that God sends anguish, for we reject the notion that the God of Jesus "wills" pain for his children. We accept as the Good News straight from God the

atement of Jesus, "It is not the will your Father which is in heaven at one of these little ones should rish." We know there are reasons ck of suffering. Physical and social seases which men are challenged to ing under control and the inescapble relationships of life which often use painful consequence to the inocent as well as to the guilty should ways be taken into account when ffering comes. We believe, howver, that when suffering does come can be made to serve us. Because e have seen characters formed on eds of pain and men take personal d social obstacles and make of them pping stones to a great exeprience d, most of all, because we believe at God is as a loving father who ver loves us so much as when we e hurt — we believe that pain can d us to experiences of His presence hich are more real than those which me in many other ways.

To Have Convictions Is to Live

Christians are challenged to follow e example which Jesus set before when he felt himself under divine ders to take his stand on the side of ith even when he knew it would ean a cross. If our lives are to count r something we must have some ndamental convictions which won't ve us alone until we have done r best to transform them from ideas d ideals to realities. Until we be- ve something strongly enough to ep us going until we have given all e have to it, we haven't actually ed. To lose out in some endeavor, t to keep one's sense of integrity an important principle; to keep e's "White Plume" unspotted — that to live in such a way as to win e crown of life.

To Die Is to Live

Our conclusions about the indeructible nature of life are based up the glorious affirmation that Jesus oke the bonds of the tomb and said, Because I live ye shall live also." We lieve that what our feeble vocaularies often call "death" is actually but a transition from one state of being, or one form of life, to another. Recognizing that dry kernels hold within them the potentials for bright blossoms, we follow the Christian teaching that deep within the life of man there is something which never reaches its fulfillment until the old body has been laid to rest. We look upon death as a gateway to life. Even our deep grief is dispelled as we hear echoing across the ages the insight of St. John: "And God himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

To Walk With Jesus Is to Live

Daring to hope it is possible for men like ourselves to have the same thrilling awareness of the living Christ which came to those who walked along the Emmaus Road with Jesus after his resurrection, we discover that this experience is reserved for those who dedicate themselves to Christ's quality of life. "For me to live is Christ." They must make it their aim in life to reflect our Lord's likeness; to do his will; to be his bondservant. It means emulating his example of losing ourselves in causes of righteousness, justice, and mercy. We, too, must seek to sow love where there is hatred, pardon where there is injury; to replace doubt with faith, despair with hope; to shed light where there is darkness and try to overcome sadness with joy. Walking with Jesus means that we so conduct ourselves that we would gladly welcome him any place he might find us; speak so that we would welcome him as the silent listener to every conversation; act in such a manner as would let us dare hope for his blesing. To so walk, speak, and act is to walk with Jesus into an experience that is life-giving and life-blessing.

To Care Is to Live

From the scriptural account of the

judgement meted out to those who feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and care for the sick we see the great contemporary challenge really to care for people. Christians can never escape their Lord's order to prove their professed love for God through love for their fellowmen. The outreach program of Christ's Church is a very practical method for showing this depth of devotion. Not everyone who says, "Lord Lord," shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but only those who "do the will of the father which is in heaven," and a part of that will is to have a concern for others.

To Give Is to Live

Men live in proportion as they give. The time-honored principle that "God is the sovereign owner of all things and man is a steward" leads to the inescapable challenge to acknowledge this trusteeship through the proportionate investment of one's time, talent, and money in causes which will help God build His kingdom. Far from being evil, in and of itself, money is an instrument, the use of which man can determine. It can become a magic wand to bring life and blessing to us and to others. We are challenged to give as we are able, being as honest with God in the use of money as we are in the use of our time and talent. The two seas in Palestine — the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea — stand as eternal symbols of the results of getting to give and getting to keep. As God has decreed that we can live only as we give out some of the air we breathe in, so he has ordained that we can really live only as we give away some of the money which we receive through the investment of ourselves in honest toil.

To Work Is to Live

One of the ways by which we gain real satisfaction and a sense of fulfillment in life is through work. Far from being something to be avoided, as one might try to escape a penalty meted out by life as a sentence for the privilege of living, work is actually one of the gate-ways to abundant life. Man finds his real purpose in life only as he applies his whole being — all his resources of body, mind, and spirit — to the challenge of some creative task; only as he finds some great undertaking or cause of which he can say, "I belong to that!" This involves not only the activity by which we gain our livelihood, but those endeavors to which we give ourselves for the sheer joy of making a contribution to the common welfare of mankind. Everyone should consider well what he is doing with his talents and his time and to be as good a steward of these as he is of his money. The church, like other institutions in society, earnestly solicits the volunteer services of dedicated people. As we respond to these opportunities we can learn why one of the first rules of life is that to work is to live.

To Love Is to Live

Through the highest experiences of human love we are led into an appreciation of the full dimensions of the love of God. The three stages of love see us progressing from self-love to bargain-love to other-love. It is only as we constantly strive for this latter, more mature love, which "seeks not its own" but unreservedly pours itself out for the welfare of others, that we qualify for membership in that select group of people who really live by love and, in so doing, know that to love is to live.

To Be Happy Is to Live

That choice portion of the Sermon on the Mount known as the Beatitudes provides us with clues to understanding what is really meant by the phrase, "To be happy is to live." Humility, which recognizes absolute dependence upon divine strength and guidance; sensitiveness to life, which makes us capable of feeling sorrow and also receptive to comfort; meekness, in terms of a commitment of all of life to God in the knowledge that it is through losing ourselves that we find ourselves — these produce a quality of happiness which is indispensa-

· to great living. What is more, the ppy person has learned the impor- ce of hungering and thirsting for best and the enduring values. id hold upon by great concerns, he ds courage to do battle in God's se of establishing a kingdom of tice and righteousness. Having me to grips with the necessity of owing mercy to others in order to n the mercy of God, and being pure heart so as to have, within, a shrine the pure God, the happiness which us enjoyed becomes real to a man lay.

The Spirit of Life

The ultimate secret which enables man really to live the quality of e which we all earnestly seek comes ly to those who allow the Holy irit, the spirit of the living God, to ve a chance at them.

It is this Divine Spark which makes n capable of believing ideas great ough to give himself to them. It is e Holy Ingredient which prompts to grow into the fulness of the stature of Christ. Only the Spirit of Christ can enable us to forgive as Jesus forgave, and to use our suffering for creative ends. Except one feels the presence of God in his heart he cannot hold to great convictions. It is this Indestructible Spirit in man's life which lives on after his body has gone to rest. Our daily walk with Jesus is maintained only because we have spiritual fellowship with him. With this Universal Spirit in our hearts we are inspired to care for others and to give our money to their needs and to work for causes which benefit mankind. This is the Spirit of Love which enhances and ennobles all of life when given a chance. Our happiness is never complete until God's Spirit has borne witness with our spirits that we are His sons.

This, then is the Life that is Life indeed. These many ingredients, properly balanced by the sense of being children of a loving heavenly Father, can give us a quality of life which enables us to say this is to live.

E THIEF AND THE SHEPHERD

Robert Sumner Jackson, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way; that man is a thief and a robber." John 10:1.

"The thief comes only to steal and l and destroy"; the true shepherd nes "that they may have life and ve it more abundantly." Naturally, e man who has wicked purposes, king harm knowingly and unre- ntantly has got to hide his purposes; cannot stand simply and openly e the repentant, the new man in rist, the man who is Christ's agent at men might have more abundant e. The new men in Christ are great- men; but I do not want to talk out them. I want to talk about the her: the sneak, the thief, and, more nerally, the evil purposer who hides s true self—the man who is in the est sense a hypocrite. Perhaps I use e word "hypocrite" in an unfamiliar nse. It is a hard word no matter in what sense it is used. And it is one often used of churchgoers.

"Hypocrisy" is characteristic of churchgoers, according to a widespread tradition among non-churchgoers. The accusation claims that churchmen profess high and mighty things such as turning the other cheek or loving their enemies, and then fail to act according to the standards they talk about. The actual substance of the accusation is sound. Certainly the standard we profess is perfection, and it is equally certain that we fall short of this standard. This is not good — and all of us are bound to confess it and to repent — but neither is it "hypocrisy."

The word "hypocrisy" comes to us chiefly from its application to various

groups of men who appear with Christ in the gospels; for instance, the men who come asking whether they should pay tribute to Caesar or not. Their hypocrisy is found not in their falling short of an ideal good which they aim toward, but in their unwillingness to show themselves for what they are. What they have come to do is explained in the sentence which begins the story: "And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, **to catch him in his words.**" Compare this real intention with the way they conduct their conversation: "And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give?"

They tell the man they intend to trap, "We know that you are true." They put on innocence as a gunman puts on a mask, and for the same reason — to cover up who they are. "Hypocrisy" means pretense, and because few people are willing to appear worse than they are, this usually means, as it did with these men and as it always does in modern usage, pretending to be better than they are by hiding their evil purposes. This kind of pretense is reflected in several types of persons: The "slanderous," or those who shield away their own wickedness by talking about the wickedness of everyone else; the "sanctimonious," who agree that holy people (themselves) might have done wrong once, but not since they've become "holy"; the "goody-goody," who refuse to think about evil, whether of themselves or others, past, present or future; the "creep," who like the thief in the text, hopes that he can so sneak around that no one will notice his errors, shortcomings, or cheats. These are some of the most obvious examples.

In its subtler forms "hypocrisy" is more difficult to recognize and more difficult yet to escape. It will help to look at the meaning of the word in its earlier and more basic sense.

In classical Greek, before it became tinged with moral meanings, hypocrisy meant "play acting" in the simple sense of an actor on the stage. The dangers to integrity which seemed to surround the profession of acting show how this simple meaning has taken on moral overtones. Acting is safe enough as long as it remains professional, but it is dangerous when it is confused with the rest of life. We have all known amateurs of the art who don't seem to know when they're on stage or off, who, as a result of their continual affectations and poses, have lost their identity not only to other people, but even to themselves, who live out their lives as ghosts rather than people, creating, I should say, among their friends and associates a sense of the eerie.

Actors don't like to be told that their profession is dangerous — and such is the force of the anti-Puritan polemic — and they don't believe it is true. The actor is not a wicked man. Neither is the high-tension wire technician a suicide. But both professions are dangerous — the one to the outer man, the other to the inner.

Hypocrisy retains its original and non-moral sense when it is understood for play-acting — on the stage, or in a game when everyone knows it is a game, but it has the sense of evil hypocrisy when it doubles for the truth. There is another whole side to this matter — that is, good play-acting. I speak now only of evil play acting, the thief who comes only to kill and destroy.

In the well-known passage from which I have quoted Christ describes the difference between the hireling and the good shepherd by explaining that when the wolf comes, "he that is an hireling and not the shepherd . . . leaveth the sheep and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep." The trouble with the hireling was not that he took money for

job. The trouble was that he was posed to be a shepherd and he sn't. For money he pretended to but when the wolf came the pre- se was uncovered. The position s too high for him, and his accept- e was a fake.

o it is with the roles we play — only in the jobs we accept for ney, but in any of the other num- us positions, such as student, nd, husband or wife, we are call- on to take in life. Some people come these things; others play-act m. The playactor has always some et reservation. He isn't really will- to be what is required, but he also t willing to give up the position. d when the wolf comes, he throws the guise and runs away, leaving rk, friends and family scattered.

Applied to the standard of ethical perfection, the danger is clear: it is not imperfection, but being imperfect and pretending that one is not. If the thief were to declare his purpose, he would no longer be a danger.

In respect to churchgoers the way to avoid hypocrisy is the way of confession: "We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed." A man who confesses openly is no longer a hyprocite. He may not be a good man — indeed if he tells the truth, he is not — but he is not a hypocrite. He draws the fangs of his own evil purposes by confession. He becomes an "open" man who is able to stand at the door with Christ and able to be Christ's agent in bringing of more abundant life.

IE TASK OF HAPPINESS

Phillips Packer Elliott, First Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, New York

Our theme is taken from the poem Robert Louis Stevenson entitled he Celestial Surgeon." You will member the lines:

f I have faltered more or less
n my great task of happiness;
f I have moved among my race
And shown no shining morning face;
f beams from happy human eyes
Have moved me not; if morning skies,
Books, and my food, and summer rain
Knocked on my sullen heart in vain;—
Lord, thy most pointed pleasure take
And stab my spirit broad awake.

The task of happiness is something which we must be ever at work. We usually think of happiness as a -product. It comes we say not by ect assault but as a correlary to mething else. We have seen many amples of people aiming at hap- ness, but missing it. They thought a large income would bring it, the right house, or a certain kind of entertainment, coarse or refined, or journeys here and there, and they have tried these things. But the more they have tried, the more they have failed, and happiness has eluded them. We have all had this experience to some degree — of trying hard to reach happiness and finding that it escapes.

We have concluded, therefore, that if it is to come at all it must come almost as an accident. It is something that is picked up casually along the way. One does his best at his daily task and if happiness comes, he is thankful for it, but if it doesn't come, he is not surprised. In any case, it is not something at which he has to work, and he never thinks of it as a task which has to be done. Yet nothing worth while in all human experience comes without some kind of effort. We cannot live on by-products. We live on what is made and earned; by the sweat of our brow or the toil of our mind. In all the experiences of

life we are to work at the task of happiness. J. B. Phillips translation of the Beatitudes goes back to the English revised version of 1881, and uses the more accurate word "Happy" for the usual word "Blessed." In a vast range of experiences, including even that of persecution, Jesus tells the disciples that they can find happiness. Nothing can prevent their obtaining it if they are determined to have it.

Now this does not mean that we are unaware of the meaning of sorrow and defeat and loss. The Beatitudes are really a catalogue of the world's experiences, both of sin and of goodness, of joy and of sorrow. Jesus knew what the disciples would have to face in the world, as all of us have to face in the world, as all of us have to face these things in the midst of our society. There are people who, like our Christian Science friends, make the error of thinking that happiness means overlooking certain realities such as sin and pain. These things do exist; they are as plain as a pike staff. One can never be happy by ignoring realities or by trying to make the world seem other than it is. Rather, it is in and through these realities that happiness can come, and not apart from them. We can find the golden strand which is woven into even the most sombre pattern; we can hear the trumpet call of triumph in the distance even though all around us there seems to be defeat.

This thought helps to balance up our world. For sometimes we fall to thinking that the world is weighted toward the sad and the difficult. A woman said to me that she wondered why the Creator had made a world where there is so much more sorrow than there is happiness. Many people would agree with her in this estimate of the unbalance of life. But sometimes that which to outside observers looks like trouble, unrelieved and unassuaged, in reality carries its own seeds of happiness, and the person who is going through experience will have found something which sustains and bestows a deep peace and joy. One may not see that that life, facing so much that is hard, has been working all the while at the task of happiness, and by that labor has earned it, has achieved it, has possessed it.

I

We ask, then, the question "How shall we engage in this task of happiness? How may we work at it?" **In the first place,** we are to believe that happiness is possible, that it can in reality be attained. There are many people who do not really believe this "Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." We dwell constantly on life's seamy side. Listen to people in their ordinary conversation and hear the accent upon the unpleasant, and the only occasional emphasis upon the helpful and the happy. We are forever bracing ourselves against a world that we expect to be harsh and cruel.

But man is born to something else also. He is born to happiness. He sometimes sighs, but he can also sing. Trouble comes, but it is not the final word. When Israel was carried captive into Babylon, they cried out as they sat beside the strange rivers, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" The fact is that they did sing it, and some of our noblest psalms come from those days of humiliation and bondage. At a time when they thought that nobody could possibly be happy, they worked at the task of happiness and they achieved it. There is something in man that makes him strive for happiness no matter how poor his condition.

The important thing, then, is to believe that it is obtainable, that it is not just a vain dream. Men do not work for something they believe doomed to failure. This does not mean that they will reach their goal, for there are many goals toward which men have worked and which they have not reached. They have not been skillful enough, or patient enough, or vigorous enough. But they have striven for these goals because

y knew that they were humanly ainable. If human effort can ac- mplish these things, then we will e our try at it. So with the task of ppiness. It can be attained, and we going to work at it.

This is true in all kinds of lives. No persons are the same. In one, all factors will seem favorable to hap- ess; it seems to come easily and not ch labor is required. In another, ch seems to be against it. The work much harder, the goal seems fur- r. Regardless of which category may be in, the fact is that this is of the goals possible for man. He placed here to be happy. He has en endowed by his Creator with tain inalienable rights — life, liber- and the pursuit of happiness. It not a vain pursuit. It is one in which n can overtake what he seeks. A ter word than "pursuit" however, Stevenson's work "task." We are to dertake this great task of happiness, lieving that it can be attained.

II

In the second place, the task of ppiness means that we will bring t the constructive factors in every perience. It is like a mining opera- n, where one must dig far to find metal, or bore deep to find the h oil. One must get down to where good things are, the elements in ry experience which are construc- e and helpful. These are buried ep, but they can be found.

Now this does not mean a casual covery of the "silver lining" which aid to be upon every cloud. We are t to twist and distort the true mean- g of what has happened so that we t something constructive and beau- l out of it. We are not to dim the e seriousness of anything that hap- ns to us.

But we are to look beneath the rface and read the deeper meanings ich are there. We can see this metimes when we look at what oth- s are going through, and realize at there are golden lessons there only they would see them. Although they may not like to be reminded of it, the fact is that they come out of these difficult experiences strengthened and often ennobled as a result. It is harder and more important for us to see and find the elements in our own lives which will make for happiness. In my life, in every experience, I am to lay hold on and lift up the positive factors which I know are there. In loneliness, where there seems to be nothing that gives content, I yet learn to understand how others feel, even the thousands of lonely people in this city, and paradoxically, in my loneliness, I realize for the first time that I am not alone, that there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. In pain I share the life of burden-bearers in every land and every time and enter into an understanding of them which I could never have otherwise, and I experience something of the discipline of soul which the bearing of pain must bring. In sorrow, I learn the meaning of life and see the path on which I must walk with a clarity that it never would have had if a shadow had not been cast upon it. I feel also with new certainty and freshness the God whose loving kindness endureth forever and whose mercies never fail. In all experiences I will see these things and I will know that they are real and that the materials of happiness are there.

All of us can do this. This is not limited to a special group with special talents. We envy those who have what we call "a happy disposition" and wish that we were born under their lucky star. The ease with which they seem to have achieved happiness is in all probability the ease which comes in any experience when practice and discipline have placed it beyond seeming effort. But whether our dispositions seem to be happy or sombre, it is "not in our stars but in ourselves" that the answer is given. Personality is of one piece. People are basically alike. What they work at they can obtain. Of happiness they

are to say, "This is my task." It is not something at which we play and it is not an achievement which comes casually or easily; it comes only through work. When our thought and attention are centered on the constructive aspects of experience, then we are about the task of happiness. It is to be found in all experience, and our labor can bring it forth.

III

Finally, the task of happiness demands a constant reliance upon God. Some would say that happiness has no connection with the long-time view of religious faith. We must snatch it here and now without looking too far ahead. "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die."

Yet a permanent happiness demands a permanent foundation. The question is — what can we trust, in what or in whom can we have confidence? For confidence lies at the root of happiness. Confidence in one another's love is at the root of happiness in any home. Confidence in the future, implemented by such practical matters as social security and pensions, can set the conditions for happiness in many lives as they face the sunset years. So with the assurance of religious belief. It gives one security and a foundation. People cannot be happy without God — it is just as simple as that. He is the source, the ground on which we must rest. There is nothing spasmodic or transient or uncertain about happiness because it rests upon the foundation which is God.

This has ever been the result of religious faith. "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace." These are the gifts which come from faith. We can test our faith, in fact, by whether we have these fruits, especially the fruit of joy. As we work at our faith, then, we work at our happiness. As our faith becomes stronger, our joy becomes stronger; the more certain we are of the fact of God, of His care, of His love, the surer will be our contentment, the firmer will be our happiness.

It was this kind of labor which Paul had in mind when he said, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." This is serious business, this matter of building a faith, of saving a life. But you have help in it. "For it is God, who worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." He, too, is busy at the task of happiness. He is working hard with you, that you may have joy.

Jesus thought of His own life as thus linked with God's. He said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." And always His purpose was man's happiness — deep, abiding, joyful. That was why He spoke as He did; that was why He lived as He did. "These things have I spoken unto that my joy may remain in you and that your joy may be full." Here is a great effort being made — man and God together working for the happiness of humankind.

We are meant to be happy. Through all that happens to us we are to find happiness. But we are not given it freely and easily. It is a task. We must work at it. We may obtain it or we may not, but the task is there. The task means that we are to believe with all our hearts that happiness can be ours. It means that we are to draw out the radiant and helpful features of every experience. It means that we are to rest continually upon the strength and help of God. And we make our prayer that of Stevenson:

> If I have faltered more or less
> In my great task of happiness;
> Lord, Thy most pointed pleasure take;
> And stab my spirit broad awake.